

Welcome to the WWU Outback Farm Community Garden!

We're working to create a beautiful and nurturing space where our community can come together to grow organic produce, herbs, and flowers. Our goal is to connect people to the earth, to each other, and to nutritious food. To make sure everyone has positive experiences, and the chance to come together for social interaction and recreation, we need to adhere to the following guidelines. By filling out an application for a garden plot, you are agreeing to these guidelines. You need to renew your commitment in March of each year. These guidelines are subject to change. You're responsible for checking your email (and keeping your address on record current) for communications from staff about the Community Garden.

You are welcome to use your garden plot all year round. Yes, even in winter...we can help brainstorm ideas to keep your plot clean and productive. During the main growing season, April– October, you need to be active in your plot by:

- Weeding and preparing the soil for planting
- Planting and growing veggies, herbs, and ornamentals
- Harvesting produce when ripe
- Maintaining weeds and taking care of pests
- Collecting seeds before they drop
- Removing dead plants, especially if they have pest activity
- Neatly store structures like tomato cages and stakes
- Trimming along the outside of your box boundary so edges are clear

Maintenance: If a garden plot looks abandoned during the main growing season, staff will send an email to the address on record. The plot holder then has two weeks to respond and show noticeable work in their garden. If there is no action after two weeks, the plot may be reassigned, and a notice will be sent via email. Keep your information up to date so we can reach you, and please notify staff if you will be unavailable for an extended period, like a vacation.

If a gardener receives three notices during a season, they must meet with a staff member to generate a garden plan and get the support needed to be successful. The fourth time a warning is needed the plot will be reassigned instead, and a notice will be sent via email. If you can no longer maintain your plot, that's ok – we know life happens. Just let us know so that we can reassign it!

Mandatory Volunteer Hours: All community gardeners need to contribute 2 hours a year to general farm cleaning and maintenance. We will offer opportunities to work with a group, or volunteer hours can be completed and reported to an Outback Coordinator.

Watering: Water barrels and watering cans are provided in the Outback, and when staff is also working the spigots will be turned on for hose watering. Do not touch the water main or any spigots, since the hardware may burst from water pressure if it's not handled correctly.

Weeds: Weeding is an active and ongoing part of gardening. Put your pulled weeds in the green waste pile at the entrance to the farm by the pavement. Our compost doesn't get big or hot enough to break down these pests! Do not plant invasive species (<https://tinyurl.com/WAinvasives>).

Pests: The Outback is an organic farm – use only organic fertilizers, weed killers, and insect killers. If you're not sure about a product, or need solutions to a pest problem, contact the Farm Manager or a student Coordinator.

Tools: Large tools can be used by Community Gardeners, including shovels, hoes, and wheelbarrows. Please clean them before returning to the shed at the end of your session. Hand tools are often brought by gardeners, but a small assortment is also available for use. The use of University tools and equipment are at your own risk.

Trash: There is no trash service inside the Farm, so please dispose of all your trash – including plastic pots and labels - in the recycling bins and dumpsters just outside the entrance to the farm on the paved area.

Safety: No drugs, alcohol, or tobacco use in the Community Garden. No fires. As a safe space for a diverse group of users, we do not allow harassment, hate speech, or threatening behavior of any kind. Please report any concerns immediately to the Farm Manager, and call campus police (650-3911) or 911 in an emergency.

No Sale of Farm Products: Community Garden members may not produce items for commercial ventures, only for personal/familial use or for donation.

To maximize your success:

- Plan to come to your garden plot about twice a week to stay on top of weeds, pests, and harvesting.
- Budget about 4 hours a week for these tasks.
- Make friends with other gardeners and student Coordinators to share successes, garden tips, and solutions to challenges.
- Use common courtesy with your neighbors – don't harvest from their plot without permission, say hello, and enjoy.
- Come to any of the free workshops and festivals that are offered at the Outback, about three per quarter!

Liability

Participation in the Outback Community Garden is entirely AT YOUR OWN RISK. No liability of any kind is assumed by Western Washington University (WWU). WWU will not assume responsibility for injury, theft or damage to property, or accidents occurring in the Garden. ALL participants are required to sign the accompanying Acknowledgement of Risk/Hold Harmless form to be able to participate in the Community Garden.